

# Assessing Progress and Looking Forward: Public Health in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

CDC recently engaged in a strategic planning process, the Futures Initiative, to enhance its capacity to protect and improve the health of the American people. This effort combines organizational improvements with a new emphasis on health for life stages and preparedness for health emergencies related to global disease, terrorism, and environmental threats. The initiative will strengthen and develop the public health workforce and help CDC meet an array of public health challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **The Futures Initiative at the National Immunization Program**

The Futures Initiative should lead to greater impact on public health, more robust public health research, improved coordination among CDC departments, and increased business accountability for CDC. In a move to consolidate expertise and maximize synergy, the National Immunization Program (NIP) has become part of a coordinating center that includes the National Center for Infectious Disease (NCID) and the National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHSTP). As part of this new center, NIP can help CDC achieve two critical health protection goals included in the Futures Initiative. NIP's efforts to fulfill its mission directly contribute to

- Health promotion and prevention of disease, injury, and disability
- Preparedness for emergencies involving infectious disease, occupational or environmental hazards, or terrorist threats

## **NIP Objectives Align with the Futures Initiative**

The National Immunization Program also works to sustain and improve national and international public health by meeting the following objectives:

- Achieving measurable improvements in public health
- Focusing on the needs of the populations we serve
- Strengthening science through public health research
- Providing leadership in the nation's health system
- Establishing global health priorities
- Becoming more effective and accountable

NIP is committed to reducing the number of indigenous cases of vaccine-preventable diseases and ensuring that children and adolescents are appropriately vaccinated. NIP also works to increase the proportion of adults and high-risk persons who are vaccinated against influenza and pneumococcal disease. Working with domestic and international partners, NIP has been in the forefront of the efforts to eradicate polio from the globe. NIP also directly contributes to reducing the global measles-related mortality rate and improving surveillance for vaccine safety. Finally, NIP improves the accuracy of vaccination coverage estimates by working with providers and by promoting the expanded use of immunization information systems.

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